



A [Buzan-type](#) Mind-Map

## Use Your Head

Tony Buzan is not an overtly political author and may seem little different from a “motivational speaker”, but his work has helped millions of students and it has always been part of the Communist University’s virtual “recommended” list. A downloadable file of our “Conspectus” of Buzan’s book “Use Your Head” is linked below.

While we have always stressed the apparently apolitical intentions of the author of this practical manual of study, yet its attraction for us may be that it does, in fact, correspond very well with our Marxist philosophy, and more particularly with

Marxism's Hegelian roots.

So let us explore that. But first, let us revise Tony Buzan's advice; because Hegel's books are generally agreed to be among the most difficult ever written. If ever we needed Tony Buzan's help, as an advisor on how to study, it is now.

### **Reading, memorising and note-taking, the Tony Buzan way**

Buzan places practical means and methods in the hands of students who are faced with the most extremely difficult books to read and to understand. "Use Your Head" was published in 1974. In 2004, your VC made a "Conspectus" of the book. This word "conspectus" is a favourite of Lenin's. It means a "seeing together". It means the same as "synopsis". It is something like "overview", which is a term that Buzan uses.

Much faster **reading** can be achieved by applying a better understanding of how reading physically happens, by doing away with a number of wrong ideas, and by applying a few useful techniques.

Much better **memory** of what is learned can be achieved by taking more breaks and by doing more short reviews of the learned material.

Much more useful **notes** can be taken if the Buzan "mind-map" technique (see the illustration above) is used. All of these things are briefly explained in the attached document, also linked below, and in Buzan's books, which are still widely available.

## The Buzan Organic Study Method

The Buzan Organic Study Method is a set of prescriptions that work together very well indeed. Particularly important are The Browse, the planning (i.e. Time and Amount), Overview, Preview, Review, looking for and using summaries/conclusions/reading from the back, and the advice on Difficult Sections, which is:

*“Moving on from a difficult area releases the tension and mental floundering that often accompanies the traditional approach. ‘Jumping over’ a stumbling block usually enables the reader to go back to it later on with more information from the ‘other side’. The block itself is seldom essential for the understanding of that which follows it.”*

It is easier to fill a hole if you are working from both sides – the far side as well as the near side. This is particularly good advice when dealing with a difficult writer like G W F Hegel.

### Buzan the Hegelian?

Now let us look again at Tony Buzan with Hegelian Marxist eyes.

What is a **Mind-Map**? It is a representation of the ascent from the abstract to the concrete. This is a key Hegelian idea and is especially important for the matter we are pursuing in response to Lenin, namely the alleged impossibility of understanding Marx’s “Capital” without good knowledge of Hegel.

Later we are going to see that the Soviet Philosopher [Evald Ilyenkov](#) wrote an entire book about the ascent from the abstract to the concrete in Marx's "Capital". Tony Buzan may well be innocent of any intentional association with this idea, but his "mind-maps" are perfect representations of it.

Secondly, consider this about Buzan's "Organic Study Method": Yes, it is organic – a good, humanist and Marxist word. But more than that, it resembles Hegel's work in the following way: it proceeds, but it does not arrive. If you are looking for a main event, or a final conclusion, you do not find it in the Buzan Organic Study Method. Is Buzan a closet dialectician? Judge for yourself.

As Andy Blunden puts it, describing the thought of Hegel: The Idea is a process.

Whether by accident or by conscious design, Tony Buzan's method fits in very well with Hegel.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [Use Your Head \(Conspectus\) Tony Buzan](#).
- To download any of the CU courses in PDF files [please click here](#).